

COMMUNES ENSLAVE COMMUNIST CHINA

November 1958

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I. China Becomes A Nation of Slaves

Communism, carried for the first time to its logical conclusion, is transforming half a billion Chinese into state-owned, communalized slaves. The element around which mankind has built his life and philosophy since the dawn of time--the family unit and all that love for it entails--has been ordered swept away so that Communism may triumph.

The New Society that has been ordained by Mao tse-tung is the most sweeping transformation of social relations the world has seen. In the Commune--the New Society--the human being is considered as nothing more than a unit of production, directed by a central authority. He is to be stripped of every physical and social tie of the past and relegated to something akin to an item from the insect world.

This New Society demands the eradication of traditional social groups in Chinese life. It means the end of the family, the neighborhood, recreational and other primary groups. Henceforth, all political, economic, cultural, social and military institutions are to be integrated within the Commune for two main purposes--to meet the production and military requirements of the state. Other than that, the individual has no reason for existence.

The prominent writer, Chen Po-Ta, says that Mao conceives of each Commune as a self-sufficient unit in which industry, agriculture and commerce serve the material life of the people, in which culture and education reflect the spiritual life and the People's armed forces serve to protect all this.

The Commune was described by Peking Radio on 5 November 1958 as a militia in which the workers, peasants, businessmen, students and soldiers are merged into one group, all united around the Party and Chairman Mao. This, the radio said, would enable everyone to take part in economic construction and defense programs.

Ideas of individualism and departmentalism are to be broken down by coordinating cultural and sports activities with production, military training and political education. Everything is to be subordinated to production.

In this new Chinese Communist order the family unit is to be killed, not by explicit order, but by the simple expedient of making it physically impossible for the home to exist. There is no doubt on this score since the Communists have clearly stated their objective of eliminating the family.

In the past the Soviets attempted to do much the same, but they ran into serious difficulties. They tried a number of things, but no solution was found. For example, at one time or another marriages or divorces were nothing but formalities, trial marriages were tried, abortions were legalized, only to be publicly condemned later on.

In 1956, the Communist Party, faced by a rapidly increasing population and insufficient food supplies, embarked on a family planning campaign. The efforts to encourage birth control, however, were somewhat weakened by the propagandists' insistence that Malthus' law of population was wrong and that the Chinese People's Republic could prove it by pushing food production ahead of the birth rate. The separation of men and women into communal dormitories, however, will certainly affect the birth rate.

The Chinese Communist idea is that the establishment of public canteens, laundries, nurseries and other communal facilities will "not only be a great saving in labor power, but will also change the attitude of the people," according to a 5 July 1958 report published by the New China News Agency.

The basic attitude to be changed concerns human relationships and particularly those of the family. Thus, not only are family homes to be replaced by dormitory living,

communal eating rooms, organized recreation and compulsory political education, but the care, feeding and rearing of children is to be taken out of the hands of the mothers and transformed into a communal function.

This shift of the age-old woman's role from the home to the field and factory is being depicted by the propagandists as a liberation from drudgery and as a status of equality with the men. The truth is, of course, that the productive power of the women is needed for the material requirements of the Communist state.

The unhappy picture of what is happening to the Chinese family is completed by a look at the fate contemplated for the aged who have always been so highly revered in China. The old people who are no longer capable of production are to be placed in institutions and cut off from contact with their kith and kin. A final degradation for a people to whom ancestor worship has always meant so much is that family graves are to be dug up and substituted by communal graveyards.

The New Society is to bring the weight of its authority to bear directly on the individual. All groups which in the past have served as a buffer between him and the state have been eliminated. In the practical terms of functions and directives, the Communal member is the only unit to be considered. The new groups which will be created in the service of the Commune and to which the individual will be assigned, are not the social groups familiar to other societies. The de-personalized new groups are discernible in those that have already been formed in Communist society such as the Party, the Trade Union or the Youth League. Such official and semi-official bodies in China will now have their offices in the housing units.

It is quite clear that the present vast manipulation of people is to concentrate all their interests, loyalty and energies on the state in order to achieve the greatest possible productive power.

The means being used are coercion and indoctrination to achieve blind obedience to the dictates of the state and the elimination of all individualistic desires. The individual in Communist China is being asked to annihilate himself and to turn his back on normal social relations. The human being is to become a robot and he is being told by the state that his only needs are materialistic ones.

II. The Chinese Commune At Work

The speed with which the Commune idea has engulfed China is literally breathtaking. The first pilot Commune, named Sputnik, was established in April 1958 in Suiping County, Honan province, although formal authorization of the system was not put through until August. Mao had explained the new project at the VIII Party Congress in May, but no action was taken at the time. Instead, the Congress approved only the 12-year agricultural plan in principle. The lag in formal authorization was possibly due to indecision or to disagreement among the Party hierarchy.

Once adopted, however, the development of the Commune was very rapid. This is shown by the following table:

| <u>Date</u> | <u>No. of Communes</u> | <u>No. of Households</u> | <u>%</u> |
|-------------|------------------------|--------------------------|----------|
| 1958 | | | |
| 30 Aug | 8,614 | 37,000,000 | 30 |
| 10 Sep | 10,000 | - | - |
| Mid-Sep | - | 62,400,000 | 50 |
| 30 Sep | 23,117 | 112,240,000 | 90.4 |

This means that 90.4 per cent of China's half-billion peasants are affected by the new order, and it was carried through in four weeks and not the three to six years called for in the August directive. According to the latest listings, the peasants in the provinces of Hopei, Kansu, Heilungkiang, Honan, Liaoning, Shansi, Szechuan, Kwangai and Shantung have all been organized into Communes.

It appears that this was even a little too fast for the Communists. A National Conference was held at Sian, Shansi, in October 1958 at which it was agreed that serious problems had arisen from the change in the patterns of production, distribution and consumption. The magnitude of the consequences attendant on such a drastic social upheaval as communalization appears to have been a little belated, especially in a society which is always boasting about its centralized planning. At all events, the Conference decreed that measures would have to be taken to resolve the difficulties.

Urban areas, in which some experiments are now underway, are being asked to proceed as rapidly as possible to conform with the rest of the country.

The experimental Communes for city areas have been announced in terms which suggest residential groupings, service groupings and other partial measures for organization. Thus, there is a Textile Machinery plant Commune in Chengchow, Honan, a Steel Works Commune in Wuhan, several street Communes in Canton and a Producers' Service Cooperative in Tientsin. The largest non-rural Commune is probably the Yangchuan Mining Area People's Commune in Shensi province, established 1 October 1958.

This experiment involves a population of 150,000 in an area of some 75 villages, 23 factories and mines, schools, stores, etc., according to the People's Daily, the official Party publication of 22 October. Living quarters have been arranged next to factories or mines and the workers given living quarters in accordance with their work assignment.

This grouping of workers makes it possible for the work cadres to take charge of their teams at any time, going with them from the place of work to the political and technical educational classes or to the organized recreation.

The frantic speed with which the Communes have been developed in the absence of formal regulations and adequate planning makes it likely that the boastful claims of achievement should be taken with reservation.

A. The Disintegration of the Family

It must not be thought that the Communists harbor any qualms about the destruction of the family unit. In fact, they are quite forthright about it and Hu Shang, Director of the Central Committee's Propaganda Department, writing in the Party's theoretical journal Red Flag, came right out and said "the full life of the people will spill out of the framework of the family," adding that the family unit must be destroyed.

As already pointed out, this is being done initially by the elimination of the physical center of the family, the home.

The order has gone out that family homes are to be destroyed as quickly as expedient as families are moved into large dormitory-barrack structures. Families are to be assigned accommodation according to their place of work and

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shifts. Since members of the same family may be assigned to different jobs and given different work hours, it follows they may not be able to share the same living quarters.

Dennis Bloodworth, writing in the London Observer on 24 September 1958, says that in Szechuan Province farm houses have been demolished and great buildings with communal kitchens have been built to accommodate 100 families. Reports from Foochow and Shensi, published on 22 August in the Wen Wei Po newspaper of Hong Kong, said that housing redistribution was an integral part in the establishment of the Commune.

B. Mass Feeding

Communal feeding in mess halls is a basic element in the New Society plan. Mass feeding, the Communists feel, not only saves labor, but it eliminates any family privacy and all those customs and activities which make up the individuality of any intimate group.

What the popular reaction to this is cannot be ascertained at the moment, but it is known that there have been complaints in the Kweichow Commune in Honan that there was not enough food, that guests could not be entertained and that the people did not like the idea of communal feeding.

However, by the end of August there were 38,000 mess halls in the Hsinyang Special District and in seven counties the mess hall was the only place where food could be obtained. On 2 November the Peking Radio reported that 247,000 mess halls have been established in Shantung.

C. Children Separated from Parents

To complete the smashing of the family, children are to be taken away from their parents and reared by the state. By 30 July 1958, in 11 provinces and autonomous regions, 1,200,000 infant care groups had been set up and in Honan province some 6,000,000 infants were in nurseries. Because there has not been sufficient time to organize the Communes properly many of these groups are only operated during the day. However, the grand plan calls for residential institutions for all children, who will thus be reared apart from their parents.

Here again, the Communists are forthright about their intentions in this regard and an article on the front page of

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the China Youth Daily of 31 October entitled "Our Beloved Country, We Promise to Take Good Care of the Children," had the following blood-chilling threats to make:

"It is a Communist ideal to put children under communal education as soon as they can be separated from their mothers....The development of children's education in the direction of socialism is a manifestation of Communist ideology. The successful operation of nurseries and creches is a very important task. It is part and parcel of our long-range plan to mold the children into men imbued with Communist ideology...."

D. Mothers Into Laborers

Radio Peking on 2 November said that the labor force of millions of women had been released from household work in the people's Communes by setting up public mess halls, child care centers, kindergartens and sewing centers. In Shantung alone, 7,840,000 women had thus joined the productive labor force.

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The People's Daily, official organ of the Chinese Communist Party, reported on 18 August the following:

In Heilungkiang province, 115,000 women had been freed to take part in summer plowing through the establishment of 50,000 nurseries; 344,000 others had been released for similar work in 21 counties of the Ta-tsu district of Shansi province because 90 per cent of the children were in nurseries.

The official line on this aspect of communalization was reflected by Madame Soong Ching-ling in a 1 November article carried by the New China News Agency. The article was entitled: "A Glorious Era, A Glorious People." She wrote that before the establishment of the Communes women were tied down to the drudgery of household work and were therefore not on an equal footing with men. Now, she said, they have an equal opportunity to participate in work. "In this way," she said, "the labor power of women is thoroughly liberated." This, of course, is typical Communist cannistry and boiled down to its essence means only that women now have the right to be slaves just like their menfolk. Like women in every country of the world it is quite logical to suppose that

relatively few of them are enthralled at being liberated from their natural function of rearing children and making a home for their husbands.

E. Institutions for the Aged

The New Society apparently has no place for the aged who can no longer work. Since the home has been abolished there is no place for them to go but into state institutions euphemistically dubbed "Happy Homes." In them, they will be expected to raise their own food. There will be little time for their families to see them, because when the younger members of the family are not working, they are marched off to political lectures or organized recreation.

The traditional veneration of ancestors, forming the basic thread which linked past, present and future, is thus destroyed and means a shattering of the very foundations of religious life. Traditionally, the family core was in its ancestors, the ancestral village, ancestral home and ancestral graves. These were the focal points for Chinese family-religious ceremonies and ritual. This family unity was the basis for morality and the guide for behavior of all family members.

The New Society therefore seeks the eradication of feelings of loyalty to other human beings and its transference to the state alone. Already, in many places ancient ancestral tombs have been opened and their remains transferred to common graves, dug deep enough so that the soil above them may be cultivated.

F. Death of the Individual

In the New Society of China the individual and his rights are doomed.

The source for this information is none other than Chairman Mao Tse-tung, who while on a trip to Anhwei in September last said that not only should an end be put to the patriarchal family system, but all bourgeois ideas concerning the rights of the individual would have to be eliminated.

Even more brutal, if that is possible, was Liu Ning-yi, who speaking before the VIII Executive Committee of the All China Federation of Trade Unions, said "without doing away with individualism, we cannot build up Communism." It therefore appears that the Chinese Communists propose nothing less than to change human nature.

The likes or dislikes of the individual have no place in this system. The plan calls for the merging of the peasant, the industrial worker, the trader into one--the all-purpose worker. A peasant may prefer to continue to till his soil, but if the state says he must go into a factory, that is what he will do.

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On 1 September the New China News Agency reported that in Tsinghai province 800 people had been allocated to help with ore smelting in neighboring counties. The People's Daily of 15 August said that in the Yutzu administrative district of Honan "more than 1,700 'reserve workers' have been drafted to help in the construction of factories, railroads and digging mines." The same newspaper said on 7 June that factories in Chungking concluded labor contracts directly with the Communes.

G. Increased Indoctrination

The Chinese Communists, whatever else may be said of them, are certainly political realists and they are fully prepared for an ideological struggle. They see it as a conflict between socialism and capitalism, between the advanced and the backward and between the collective and the individual. This calls for a heightened campaign of socialist indoctrination, according to his file of 16 September.

Naturally, the accent in such indoctrination will be to imbue the worker with a sense of dedication to his work and to the state and to extract the last ounce of productive power from him.

The Soviet Stakhanovite movement was child's play in comparison with the competition, praise, penalties and so forth that are poured out in the Chinese campaign. Dispatches from Chinese provinces claim that many production teams work continuously for 24-hour shifts and that far from having to supervise the workers, the leadership works hard to control the intensity of labor. However, there are indications that everything is not quite as easy as all that. Some regulations for building the Communes offer serious contradictions to these claims of excessive, voluntary labor.

For instance, "labor custody" punishes those guilty of destructive activities. Former landlords, rich peasants, "counter-revolutionaries," and those who have been deprived of their civil rights may join Communes as "non-formal," non-voting, but allegedly economic equal, members. This, of course, means that they, too, will be given the chance to

labor for the state. But they are to be watched and subjected to particularly intensive indoctrination.

Payment for work is to be based not only upon production and over-fulfillment of quotas, but upon obedience, the correct political attitude and the "struggle against evil personalities."

H. The System

The Commune system as it now exists in China is an interim one, pending the drafting of finalized rules and regulations. The eventual pattern is to be one single Commune embracing an entire county. At the moment several Communes are organized into a federation in one county. This will allow a certain degree of organizational flexibility, of different treatment for the various Communes and maintenance of production while the latter adjust to a lower standard of living, according to Red Flag.

The system for payment varies and it is not known at the moment what the final form will be. In the Anhwei Commune, for instance, the worker is paid in kind and the People's Daily has recommended that this system be extended to other Communes because it provides the greatest possible degree of control. Under it, even a worker's request for goods must be approved. Since all of the individual's possessions are taken over by the Commune when he becomes a member, the system of payment in kind eliminates the last vestige of individualism as expressed in the pride of ownership.

The formula is to each according to his needs. However, a man's needs are determined by committees, so even this aspect of individual choice or decision is removed.

There are some Communes in which payment for work is in money. In some of them a basic wage is fixed at a level just sufficient to cover subsistence needs. However, only 80 per cent is actually handed out and the balance is withheld and is only paid out as a "bonus" for "outstanding work".

The People's Daily of Peking reported on 16 October that the officials had decided that piece-work wages were un-Communist. It seems that maximum rates, that is to say above a basic wage, in many factories in Shanghai could not be easily controlled under this system when working hours

were increased to meet new, heightened production quotas. Therefore, the workers, after long discussion, "spontaneously" rejected the piece-work system and agreed to accept a system of fixed wages and rewards.

However, all present systems of remuneration now have two things in common: the worker gets virtually nothing above the mere subsistence level and he is practically "frozen" at his present place of work. To move elsewhere is virtually out of the question.

Without money, the individual has no medium of exchange. He is therefore prevented from exercising any choice between commodities. Furthermore, regardless of the system of payment, failure to meet work standards is punishable by reprimand, wage cuts or demotion to a lower wage scale.

I. Children the Target

The prime target for the aims of communal China is the children. They do not have to be re-educated. They can be taught "correctly" right from the beginning. Therefore, lest they be contaminated by their elders, they must be surrounded by an environment and an aggressive educational program in which nothing exists that is not in conformity with Communistic dictates.

Youngsters of 16 years of age may join Communes as full-fledged members. However, the younger ones are not to be deprived of their chance to work for the Glorious State. For instance, when agricultural quotas were raised time after time, children were withdrawn from primary and secondary schools to help meet the quotas. At one time, an average of 10 per cent of the school children in seven provinces were withdrawn, and in some the figure even reached 50 per cent. In 1955 it was estimated that 2,500,000 primary school children had been sent to work in the collectives.

However, there appears to be some restriction on child labor and there are reports that in some places no child is allowed to work more than two hours a day on school days, or six hours when they do not have to attend classes.

J. Ruthless Exploitation

Exploitation of the individual in the Commune far exceeds exploitation of the worker. It is complete, even by Marxist

economic standards. Marx, it will be remembered, enunciated a theory of labor value and surplus value and declared that the withholding of this surplus value from the worker was exploitation. Surplus value, it may be recalled, is that amount produced by the worker above his minimum needs to sustain life and his productive power.

However, what we see in China today is not only the quest for more efficient means of exploitation, but the active decrease of the minimum considered necessary for subsistence to a point below that tolerated by any civilized country.

Marx, to give him his due, maintained that children who were forced to work long hours were denied the opportunity to grow normally. The Chinese Communists, however, have embarked on a program in which children are encouraged to show their devotion to the state by long hours of work. But in China, this is not exploitation. It is called "spontaneous" and "voluntary" support of the state.

III. Communism The Road To Communes

If the world were ever in doubt about the ultimate objective of Communism, the Chinese Commune has given its terrifying answer. A shocked world now knows that once the road of Communism has been embarked upon, the Commune is the only logical end.

The Communists are dedicated to this form of human debasement and are working night and mair to impose it on the whole world. It is a tragedy that many of the Have-Nots are inclined to accept the hollow promises of Communism at their face value, and when the realization of the truth finally dawns, it is usually too late to organize any resistance.

What is this Communist way of life? Stated in its most simple terms it means the organization of an entire nation for combat. The militarization of society, in organization, discipline, mode of living and authority has been proclaimed time and again in official Chinese Communist publications. With 90.4 per cent of half a billion Chinese peasants in its grip, the Commune is a stark reality.

And what is this reality? It is the individual sacrificed to increasing production for the state. It is children separated from their mothers and homes and being trained to become spineless tools of the state. It is women who are not to be allowed to fulfill their natural functions as mothers and housewives. They have been "freed" from all that to become nothing more than slave laborers. It is old people with no place to go other than state homes. It is men, deprived of their natural rights as human beings to be productive in their own fashion, to shape their own lives and to live in the dignity that is manhood. No longer is the Chinese man able to aspire to the noble role of head of household, revered by wife, children and relatives.

Under the Commune he can look forward only to a life of militarized regimentation, a poor thing deprived of any rights and dependent on the problematinal charity of the Communistic state.

Within each Commune everyone is to become a soldier. When not engaged in productive work, drill is to be his lot.

Millions of Chinese have "enlisted" in recent weeks and by mid-September, seven million militiamen had been organized in the Hubei province alone. In Kiangsu province, 8,400,000 young people have been formed into military units.

This is the so-called Utopian society the Communists are determined to force upon the world.

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